

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-9, 14, and 15 are pending in the present application; Claim 1 having been amended, Claims 10-13 having been canceled, and Claims 14 and 15 having been added by way of the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action Claims 1 and 6-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by Lida (U.S. Patent No. 6,952,279); Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Lida in view of Saga (U.S. Patent No. 6,873,841); Claims 3 and 4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lida in view of Otsuka et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,700,674) and Claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Lida in view of Sato (U.S. Patent No. 6,230,189). Claims 11-13 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim and indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

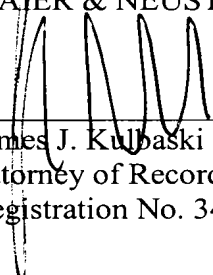
Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter. In response, Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of allowable Claim 11. Similarly, Claims 12 and 13 have been rewritten to be in independent form as Claims 14 and 15, respectively. Therefore, since independent Claims 1, 14 and 15 contain subject matter indicated as allowable by the Examiner, Claims 1, 14 and 15 are allowable. Similarly, dependent Claims 2-9 are allowable as directly or indirectly depending on allowable Claim 1. Withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) and 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is respectfully requested.

The specification has been amended to delete the language in lines 2-4 of page 2 as unnecessary.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, the present application is in condition for formal allowance and an early and favorable action to that effect is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



James J. Kulbaski
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 34,648

Customer Number
22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413-2220
(OSMMN 08/07)

I:\ATTY\KJD\242364US-AM.DOC